

Message Text

SECRET

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67

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 SY-10 USSS-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 A-01 OPR-02 EB-11

SCA-01 NEA-11 DRC-01 /172 W
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R 251400Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6783

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

S E C R E T BLANTYRE 109

E.O. 11652: XGDS 5B(1)

TAGS: PFOR, MI, PINR, MOPS, MZ, PU

SUBJ: MALAWI-FRELIMO RELATIONS

REF: BLANTYRE 68

SECRET/NOFORN

1. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED JAN 23 WITH JOHN NGWIRI, SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MALAWI-FRELIMO RELATIONS SPECIFICALLY SIGNIFICANCE OF FRELIMO ATTACKS ON BEIRA-BLANTYRE RAILWAY. NGWIRI STATED MALAWI'S BASIC POLICY CONTINUES TO BE TO REMAIN NEUTRAL IN CONFLICT BETWEEN FRELIMO AND PORTUGAL. BY CIRCUMSTANCES OF GEOGRAPHY, MALAWI MUST INEVITABLY SUFFER. AS US KNOWS BOTH FRELIMO AND PORTUGAL HAVE REPRESENTATION IN MALAWI. MALAWI ACCEPTS PRESENCE OF FRELIMO WHEN UNARMED. IT ALSO ACCEPTS ENTRANCE OF UNARMED PORTUGUESE. INFRINGEMENTS OF MALAWA TERRITORY BY ARMED FRELIMO AND PORTUGUESE DO OCCUR AND IN SUCH CASES MALAWI PROTESTS.

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2. ACCORDING TO NGWIRI FRELIMO ATTACKS ON BEIRA-BLANTYRE RAILWAY ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS ATTACKS ON BEIRA-ZOBUE ROAD WHICH STARTED TWO YEARS AGO. THEY ARE CONSEQUENCES OF CONFLICT. BOTH ADVERSELY AFFECT MOVEMENT OF GOODS TO MALAWI AND ZAMBIA. HOWEVER, GOM IS RESISTING CURRENT PORTUGUESE EFFORTS TO INVOLVE MALAWI WITH FRELIMO OVER ATTACKS ON RAILROAD. MALAWI TAKES POSITION THAT SUPPRESSING SUCH ACTIVITY IS RESPONSIBILITY OF AUTHORITY CONTROLLING TERRITORY WHERE ATTACKS ARE OCCURRING. SHOULD ATTACKS TAKE PLACE WITHIN MALAWI, WHICH HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE, THIS WOULD BE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER. INTERRUPTIONS OF RAIL TRAFFIC SO FAR HAVE BEEN BRIEF WITH NO REAL EFFECTS ON MOVEMENT OF GOODS. MORE AND MORE TRAFFIC IS BEING DIVERTED TO NACALA RAILWAY WHICH SO FAR HAS NOT BEEN ATTACKED.

3. COMMENT: NGWIRI PRESENTED RELAXED OFFICIAL VIEW OF FRELIMO ATTACKS ON RAILWAY, EMPHASIZED MALAWI REFUSAL TO BE DRAWN IN, AND SHOWED SUSPICION THAT PORTUGUESE ARE TRYING TO INVOLVE MALAWI WITH FRELIMO. HIS ATTITUDE CONTRASTS WITH OTHER REPORTS REFLECTING CONCERN AT HIGH LEVELS IN GOM OVER FRELIMO'S INTENTIONS TOWARD MALAWI, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO NACALA LINE. THESE REPORTS ALSO SHOW MALAWI HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH FRELIMO LEADERSHIP ON QUESTION BUT HAS FAILED TO RECEIVE SATISFACTION.
BURDETT

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NNN

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